



Northern Rockies Coordination Group Northwest Montana Zone

September 13, 2007

For More Information Contact:

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Effective Monday, September 17; Stage I Fire Restrictions in NW Montana

Northern Rockies
Coordination Group

NW Montana Zone
Member Agencies

Montana DNRC
Northwestern Land
Office

U.S. Forest Service
Flathead National
Forest

U.S. Forest Service
Kootenai National
Forest

National Park Service
Glacier National Park

U.S. Fish & Wildlife
Service

Flathead/Swan Area
Refuges

Flathead County

Lake County

Lincoln County

Sanders County

Fire restrictions in Northwest Montana will change from Stage II to Stage I on Monday, September 17 due to predicted cooler temperatures, higher humidities, and potential moisture after the weekend. This includes all lands in Northwest Montana within Flathead and Lincoln Counties, plus that portion of Lake County outside of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribal Lands, plus all lands administered by the Kootenai National Forest, Flathead National Forest, and Glacier National Park. These administrative boundaries include portions of Sanders County west of Whitepine, Glacier County within Glacier National Park, Missoula County north of Summit Lake, and Powell County within the Flathead National Forest.

At this time, Stage I Fire Restrictions continue for the Bob Marshall Wilderness Complex (Bob Marshall, Scapegoat and Great Bear Wilderness) lands on the Flathead, Lewis and Clark, Helena and Lolo National Forests.

Flathead National Forest Fire Manager Allen Chrisman said, "We continue to respond to new fire starts in Northwest Montana. Fuel conditions remain extremely dry; however, cooler temperatures, longer nights, and higher humidities have helped to decrease fire activity and rate of spread."

Beginning Monday, September 17, building, maintaining, attending or using a fire or campfire will only be allowed in designated sites as identified by the respective land management agency. The designated sites for the northwest area will be listed at <http://www.mt.blm.gov/fire/restrictions/index.html> by Monday.

Hoot Owl restrictions prohibiting woods activities, welding and other work with internal combustion engines from 1 p.m. to 1 a.m. will be lifted effective Monday, September 17, as well.

No open fires are allowed on private land within any of the cooperating counties with Stage I restrictions, unless prior written permission is obtained by the local fire chief or fire warden. Flathead County Director of Emergency Services Mark Peck said, "Most of Flathead County outside of state and federal management is located in the valley at lower elevations that include more values at risk, and somewhat warmer weather." Peck continued, "We've come this far with much success and cooperation with our suppression activities, but we're not out of the woods yet."

Stage I fire restrictions also prohibit smoking, except in an enclosed vehicle or building, a developed recreation site or while stopped in an area at least three feet in diameter that is barren or cleared of all flammable materials. Anyone causing a wildfire can be held financially responsible for damages and suppression costs.

All the cooperating agencies would like to thank the public for their cooperation with the Stage II restrictions and their continued support of fire prevention activities.

For more information, visit <http://www.fs.fed.us/r1/fire/nrcg/> or contact a local Forest Service, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation or National Park Service Office or your local fire department.

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